

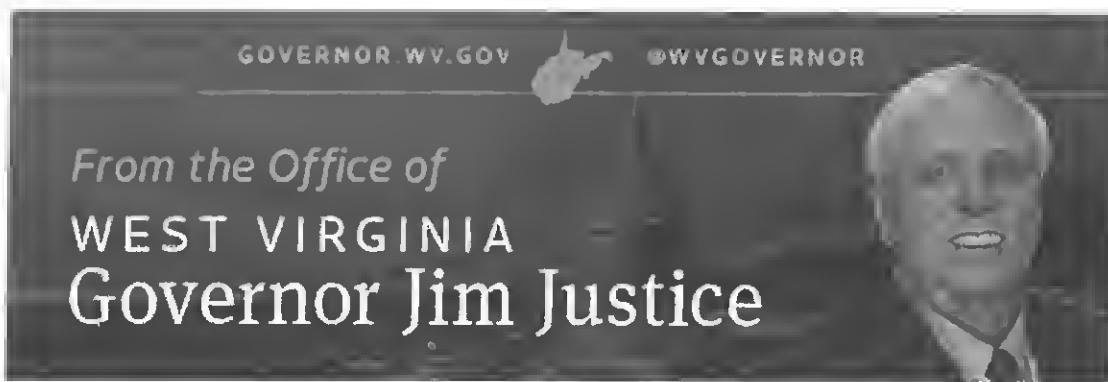
**Ken Ward**

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**From:** Office of the Governor <govofficecomm@wv.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 30, 2019 5:19 PM  
**To:** kward@wvgazettemail.com  
**Subject:** Gov. Justice signs bill saving Pleasants Power Station from closure

A message for Ken Ward  
- kward@wvgazettemail.com

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Tuesday, July 30, 2019

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## **Gov. Justice signs bill saving Pleasants Power Station from closure**



**PLEASANTS COUNTY, WV** – Gov. Jim Justice signed House Bill 207 today during a ceremony at the Pleasants Power Station in Willow Island. The bill exempts certain merchant power plants from the business and occupation tax and will prevent the Pleasants Power Station from closing, saving more than 160 jobs at the plant and hundreds more indirect jobs associated with the plant.

"Nothing on this planet could make me more proud than just right now, this minute, being able to sign this bill," Gov. Justice said. "I mean it when I tell you that the coal industry in our state is unbelievably important and we've got to preserve it in every way."

The Governor was joined by several state and local leaders, plant workers, coal miners, and residents of Pleasants County for the ceremonial signing.

The bill was passed by the West Virginia Legislature on July 23, just one day after being introduced as part of the recent special session.

"This moment is so historical, we moved at light speed," Gov. Justice said. "Do you realize the magnitude of the bipartisanship that was done here in pulling this off?"

"Fifteen days ago, we asked for the opportunity to be here today. At that point, we never dreamt that we could pull it off this quickly," Pleasants County Commission President Jay Powell said. "We have a Governor, we have legislators who could have very easily listened to what everybody else was saying – it's no secret, the war on coal – there's no secret that those in Pleasants County know the war on this power plant. They could have listened to those voices. Thank the good Lord above, the West Virginia legislators and Governor Justice didn't listen to those voices. Instead they did what West Virginians do and they listened to what should be listened to and that is what makes sense."

"It started with leadership from the Governor and his staff, recognizing how important this issue was and what could be done to fix it, so I thank them," FirstEnergy Solutions CEO John Judge said. "Then it moved to the House and Senate, where they asked a lot of hard questions. They understood the importance of saving the plant and saving these jobs and really helping the economy of Pleasants County and they took action quickly."

"I think it speaks for itself, we all need good jobs, but the overwhelming support for this bill coming from the UMWA, the workers that dig the coal, I know the union trades were backing us big and we support them," Pleasants Power Station employee John Roberts said. "It doesn't just affect our employees here. It affects everybody outside of it also."

House Bill 207 will take effect 90 days from passage, on October 21.

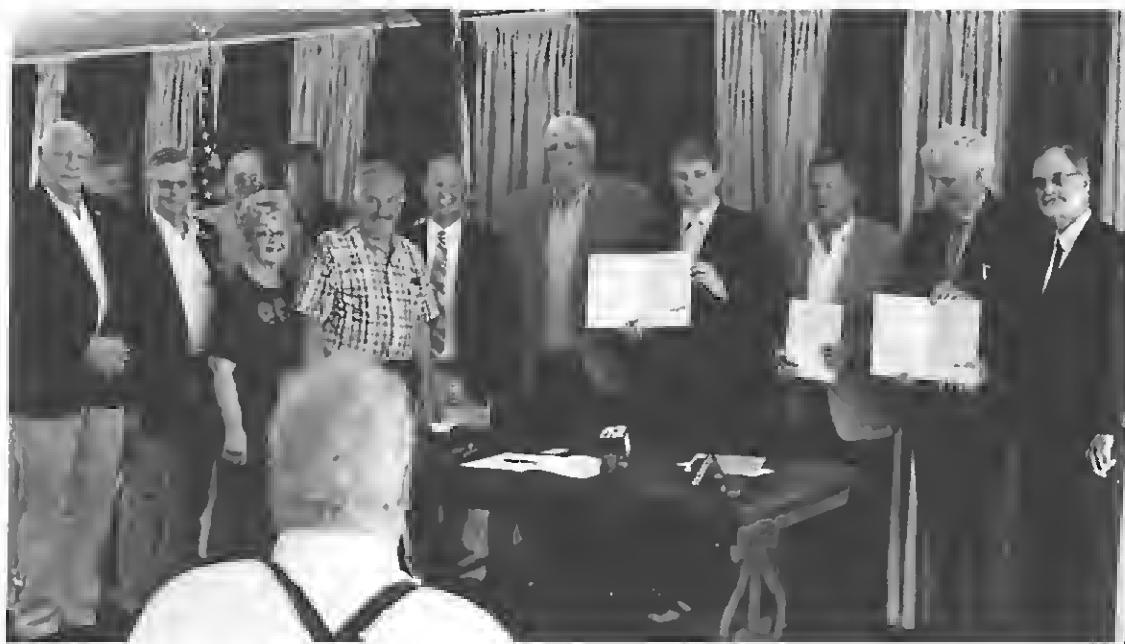
"At the end of the day, what this great plant gives us...it gives us hope for all of you," Gov. Justice said. "The multiplier effect of the dollars is off the chart."

[\*\*Click here to read the bill in its entirety\*\*](#)

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